The first step towards the development of Crawley was taken when the Senate agreed to a request from Professor Whitfield in March 1914, for permission to remove the Engineering Department from Irwin Street to the Crawley House. The Government had granted £250 to adapt the old building to its new use. This was just 12 months after the beginning of University teaching. The temporary premises in Irwin Street were very crowded and the Engineering Staff were very pleased with the shift even though it was two miles from the other activities of the University.

At this time it was anticipated that the acceptance of Crawley estate as the permanent home of the University would soon be arranged. But this was over sanguine for the Battle of the Sites which began in May 1912, when a letter had been received from the Premier requesting the surrender of certain endowment lands in exchange for Crawley and was to continue for 12 years, until in 1926 the Hackett bequest including money to build put an end to the agitation to find some other site.

During the interval the Senate had no money with which to improve the property even if the persistent agitation against Crawley as a permanent home had not existed.

The outbreak of War in August 1914 interrupted all progress. But Dr. Hackett, who from the first had been a strong supporter of Crawley, with a view to being ready to Build when war ceased and also I have no doubt to strengthen the case for Crawley offered prizes for a design for the layout of Crawley. The first prize was won by Mr. Desbrow Annear.

In the meantime the Students required playing fields and in May 1919 they applied to the Senate for permission to layout a sports ground at Crawley. This was granted provided the position was first approved by the Senate.
In May 1920, The Vice-Chancellor (Paterson) wrote to the Premier (Mitchell) asking if Crawley "could be used for University purpose generally as distinct from Site". The Premier was however very cautious and replied that the request from the Vice Chancellor would have to be considered by the Cabinet. What the Vice Chancellor meant by the phrase "for University purposes generally" is obscure. The cautious sent apparently desired some security before the Students spent money in preparing a playing oval.

In July 1921, The Chairman G.P. C. (Somerville) reported to the Senate that a commencement had been made with the planting of Trees at Crawley about 200 had been obtained from the State nursery. Very few if any, of these have survived as there was no gardener to care for them. Meadowcroft, an old servant of the Shentons was little more than a caretaker and his chief interest was the collection of agistment fees from the owners of horses which were given a week end spell on the VELDT grass of Crawley paddocks.

At this time the Camping on Crawley problem was growing as well as the popularity of Matilda Bay beach. In October 1923 The Subiaco Council requested the Senate to dedicate the necessary land for Myers Street to be continued to the Beach. The Council did not however, undertaken to make the extension and the Senate refused the request. The application was renewed in March 1925.

They requested the Senate to dedicate the Land necessary to continue Myers Street to the foreshore for the convenience of the large numbers of the Public who desired to visit Matilda Bay beach. This request was supported by a number of members of the Senate. It was pointed out that the University lands had an unbroken length from Stirling Highway southward to Nedlands Beach of \( \frac{2}{3} \) of a mile.

It would be possible to prevent the large
number of people who desired to reach the beach from crossing our lands and it was better to have a properly made roadway. But the Council's request was fused.

These requests and the Campers made the Senate realize that better control of our grounds (in prospect ours) was desirable, and negotiations were opened with the Parks and Gardens Board. In August 1925 the following agreement was entered into.

**LAYOUT AND CARE OF THE UNIVERSITY GROUNDS AT CRAWLEY.**

It was decided -

(i) That the Parks and Gardens Board be asked to take over the work of layout and keeping in order the University Grounds at Crawley with whatever money the Government may grant from year to year with a maximum of ten years.

(ii) That the Hon, the Premier be asked to restore the grant of the Parks and Gardens Board to its former figure of £2500/-/- per annum in lieu of the present £1900/-/-, the difference being utilised by the Board for the work on the University Grounds.

(iii) That certain specified work round the buildings, tennis courts, etc. now carried out by Mr. Meadowcroft be retained by the University, and special arrangements to be made for sports grounds etc.

(iv) That the Parks and Gardens Board and the University should consult together and secure as soon as possible a combined plan of layout for University grounds and Foreshore Reserve.

(v) That the Parks and Gardens Board take in hand as soon as possible the area below the new Science Buildings.

At this time Mr. Campbell was the Parks and Gardens Board’s former Gardener and two ideas he had about the layout have persisted to this day: The first was to have six areas defined and planted with trees indigenous to each State. The second was to plant in formal rows the large block of Palms of several varieties near the Engineering Department.

The great stimulus given to planning by the information that the University would benefit greatly by the realisation of the Hackett estate extended to the Grounds. In August 1926 a committee consisting of the Chancellor (Saw), Vice Chancellor (Whitfield), Chairman G.P.C. (Somers-
ville), and Chairman Finance Committee (Battye) were authorised to secure a contract for levelling and preparing a sports Oval, for this work the contract price was £270. (It is now the Riley Oval).

In the next month September 1926, the Senate instructed Mr. Nunn the Lecturer in surveying to prepare a relief model of Crawley at a cost of £50.

At the same meeting it was decided to call for competitive designs for the layout of that portion of the grounds North of Stirling Highway which by the Desbrow Annear plan was reserved for Science Buildings. This shows that although Professor Wilkinson had by this time been brought into the planning by Whitfeld the members of the Senate were still thinking in terms of the Desbrow Annear Plan. So in December 1926 to prevent further confusion a resolution (Shann, Battye) was carried "That all decisions adopting and modifying the Annear Plan and specifically that of August 1922 allotting to the Science Departments that blocks previously set aside for Professors houses be rescinded.

Before this the Building for Geology and Biology had been erected (1924) to accord with the Annear plan. This accounts for the fact that they are so isolated and detached from all subsequent building.

A special meeting (29/11/26) was called to meet Professor Wilkinson and discuss with him his idea as to the Buildings to be erected and the general layout of the Grounds. The Professor's ideas involved a complete change of plan, for whereas Mr. Desbrow Annear provided for the various Departments being separated from each other by considerable space and scattered over the whole of the Crawley estate and also over the area North of Stirling Highway, the Wilkinson plan proposed to have the Administration Block, the Great Hall and the Teaching Departments concentrated round two areas which he called the "Court of Honour” and the "Grand Court".
FOOTNOTE - (This idea Professor Wilksmore with his usual sting dubbed a "congested area"). So the resolution (Shann, Battye) rescinding all Senate resolutions, relative to the Annear plan, became necessary and with them out of the way it was possible to adopt the sketch plan submitted to the same meeting (December 1926). This was done and ever since all plans for both permanent and temporary buildings have conformed to it.
By December 1926 a building and Grounds Committee had been formed and in the flush of our newly acquired wishes it was authorised to spend money for clearing and planting. In March 1927 expenditure up to £500 was authorised for preliminary clearing planting and necessities.

The Senate in July 1927 carried the following resolution:

"That Mr. Somerville be asked to discuss the open air Auditorium with the gardener Mr. Campbell so that arrangements for planting trees could be made at once."

Professor Wilkinson's plan provides for a large rectangular space on the North side of Stirling Highway with (what was then Ferdinand Avenue) and the main entrance to the University grounds directly opposite each other.

When Alsop's plans were accepted it was seen that the most prominent feature of Winthrop Hall, the Tower, was slightly East of a direct line with Ferdinand Avenue and it was also seen that the Tower would make a very fine focus for a vista from as far away as the junction of Ferdinand Avenue with Thomas Street Subiaco.

This also became linked up with a proposal to increase the width of Ferdinand Avenue and Thomas Street by 60 ft, the land to be CEDED by the Kings Park Board for that purpose.

The University records relative to the matter are very deficient but from Kings Park Board file it appears that as early as 1916 that body approached the University asking that ½ chain on each side of Ferdinand Avenue be transferred to them by the University in order to improve the approach to Kings Park from what was then Perth Fremantle Road. The Vice Chancellor, Professor Murdoch, replied (March 1916) "that the matter would be considered when the lands in question are actually vested in the University."

The battle of the Sites was just beginning
and ten years were to pass before the agitation to establish the University on some other site was to terminate, but the Vice Chancellor's letter concluded optimistically "I may mention that the formal transfer is expected to take place shortly."

The Lands Department (12/4/1916) wrote to J.D. Connelly, Chairman of the Kings Park Board, about a suggested (by who, not stated) transfer of Park Lot 132 for University Lot 127 which fronted the Eastern side of Ferdinand Avenue. Lot 132 formed portion of Kings Park Reserve and had frontages to Perth Fremantle Road, Government Road (now Park Road) and an unnamed Street on its eastern boundary and contained 4 acres.

It had evidently been reserved to give a future entrance to kings Park from Perth Fremantle Road, Its Western boundary coincided approximately with the eastern boundary of the present St. George's College Block, Departments of Geology and Biology and Tuart House now occupy it.

The Vice Chancellor (Murdoch) agreed (22/8/1917) on behalf of the Senate with the exchange of an equal area of land.

Parliament in 1917 passed an act to permit of the transfer shown by the following sketch map.
By Special Act No. 21 of 1917 Block A was exchanged for B & C. A was part of Kings Park Reserve and had been apparently intended to be the entrance from Perth Fremantle Road to the Park.

B was part of the land with regard to which negotiations were then proceeding to exchange for University endowment land at West Subiaco.

C was a section of Park Road and was added to B in order to give unbroken connection between Kings Park and Stirling Highway.

After this 1917 transfer, nothing was done until Whitfeld wrote to Kings Park Board on 29th May, 1934.

The Senate had decided to build a Women's Hall on the West side of Ferdinand Street at the Southern end of Poole Avenue. They suggested that it would provide a more dignified entrance to the Park if the Board had land on both sides of Ferdinand Street instead of a block on only the East side. The University he believed would be willing to exchange land to make this possible and he submitted a plan showing such an exchange. On this plan for the first time Ferdinand Street is called Winthrop Avenue.
Plan submitted by Whitfeld to Kings Park Board, May 29th, 1934. It defines the lands ultimately exchanged.

The Kings Park Board agreed to the exchange of land but submitted an alternative plan it favoured. Instead of one wide Roadway as in Whitfelds, it provided for an Island in the centre 42 feet wide with lawns and flowers and a central row of Norfolk Pines, two traffic Roads each 20 ft. wide and footpaths 22 ft. wide.

The Senate (17/7/34) agreed to the Board's plan with the exception of the Central row of trees, as they would
interfere with the Vista terminating on the University Buildings. The Senate insisted that the garden area should not be planted with anything which grew higher than some low shrubs. With this view the Kings Park Board agreed. In 1934 Legislation authorising the transfer of land from and to the two organisations was passed.

The project then became dormant until 1940 when Mr. Watson, Secretary of the K.P. B., revived it.

On 26th August 1940 he wrote to the Perth and Subiaco Councils and several conferences were held between them and the Kings Park Board. A plan was agreed upon and work put in hand and completed to its (1946) present stage in May 1941.

The Town planning Commissioner condemned what was being done and submitted a plan of his own. It had one fine feature, a wide semi-circular approach from Stirling Highway. This was rejected by the Municipal Councils which were finding the money chiefly because of the high cost of bituminising the large Circus in the plan.

Professor Wilkinson also favoured a large open space at this point and it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that it may yet be formed.

The Town planning Commissioner sent a copy of his proposals to Mr. Rodney Alsop. Mr. Alsop wrote approving and made one interesting comment. There had been general agreement that no tall growing trees should be allowed in Winthrop Avenue. In contrast with this Mr. Alsop says in his letter to the Town Planning Commissioner.

"In my opinion the fine Avenue of approach could be made both to the Kings Park entrance and to the University by an Avenue of tall trees planted close up to the existing roadway."

When stating this opinion from Melbourne I do not think Mr. Alsop had any knowledge of the length of the vista back to Thomas Street Subiaco or the height of that point above Stirling Highway. He was it appears to me thinking only of the flat length between Stirling High-
way and Park Road.

This flat length is 36 feet above high water mark but at the corner of Winthrop Avenue and Monash Avenue the height has increased to 50 feet, so that if high growing trees were planted along the flat length of Winthrop Avenue they would, when well grown, hide the University from an observer standing on any portion of Winthrop Ave back to Thomas Street, Subiaco.

During the year 1927 and half of 1928 the authority given by the Senate resolution of December 1926 to "spend money" seems to have been fully availed of by both Vice Chancellor Whitfeld and the Building and Grounds Committee. A return submitted to the Senate in July 1928 gives the expenditure on the Grounds up to 30th June 1928.

| Expenditure from Donations (This came I presume from the Guild) | £311 |
| Expenditure from General University funds | 407 |
| Expenditure from Hackett bequest funds | 3567 |
| **Total** | **£4285** |

The Finance Committee reported that the expenditure on the grounds at Crawley to June 30 last had been £4,285, expended from donations, general funds and the Hackett Bequest. The main items were £893 for the sports oval, including reticulation; £314 for the women's hockey ground, including reticulation and fencing; £226 for tennis courts; £344 for plant; £164 for pumping plant and reticulation; £1,878 for clearing, forming, planting and fencing, and £363 for excavation of the site of the Court of Honour.

Less refund from Government, being cost of Road to Engineering (repair of old Shenton private road to Perth Fremantle Road.) 103

**£4182**

The source from which this money was drawn was the Hackett Bequest as set out in the last paragraph of clause 7 of the Order of the Court No. 2 of 1931, December 22nd, 1926.

Clause 7 dealt with the revenue from two sources. The first was the interest on £150,000 the sum allocated for Building, this would be a diminishing amount as the
Buildings proceeded. The second was the sum of £50,000 endowment "to provide in whole or in part the annual cost of the maintenance and management of the Halls and Library hereinafter mentioned and of the adjoining grounds".

As the cost of maintenance of the Buildings for some years after their erection would be very small the Senate at its discretion might spend the interest on both the unexpended Building fund and the maintenance endowment - "for the purchase of books (to ultimately form part of the Library in Winthrop Hall) and or for the layout and upkeep of the University grounds at Crawley. Income not so used for such purposes in the next or any succeeding year or added to the CAPITAL fund producing the interest."

What was actually done with all the money it is difficult now to see. No drainage was done and of the cleared land used for the Main Sports and Practice Ovals the greater part had been cleared for farming purposes by the former holders. The area occupied by the Buildings had to be cleared by the Contractor and the balance remained under its natural Bush cover for many years.

Mr. Campbell had on an average about 7 men on his staff up to his death in May 1930.

On Mr. Campbell's death the arrangement of August 1925 by which the Parks and Gardens State Board supervised the University Grounds was terminated.

In April 1931, The Acting Vice Chancellor (Somerville) suggested that a conference consisting of representatives of the University, the Conservator of Forest and the Town Planning Commissioner to plan the layout of Crawley. The Senate though favourable to the idea deferred consideration until it was ascertained what plan, if any, had been worked to by Campbell and Whitfeld. As Whitfeld was on his way to Europe, information was sought from Mr. Parker. According to him there had been no plan. Mr.
Campbell had roughly defined certain areas in which trees indigenous to the Six States of the Commonwealth had been planted. Even this had been confined to a triangle formed by Stirling Highway, a line drawn from the Hackett Buildings to the Engineering Department and thence back to Stirling Highway along the frontage to Shenton private road. After the adoption of the Wilkinson layout it had been observed, the only variation had been the planting of the Open Air Auditorium according to Mr. Somerville's plan, and the planting of the Cyprus Pines in the Court of Honour (now Whitfeld Court) to accord with a sketch by Alsop in May 1930. Nothing came of the proposal for a conference.

July 1931. Letter from Professor Paterson protesting against organised sport on University Ovals on Sunday. The Acting Vice Chancellor replied that he could see no harm in the present attitude which neither condemned nor approved of Sunday Sport.

In August 1932 the Senate appointed a Grounds Committee consisting of the Vice Chancellor with power to vote and Messrs. Gillett and Somerville.

In December 1933 the first memo regarding the erection of an Official Residence for the Vice Chancellor was received from the Vice Chancellor (Whitfeld) Tuart House and its grounds are part of the University Site and the grounds are maintained by the University Gardening staff. The subject has been dealt with elsewhere.

In April 1936 Somerville drew attention to the fact that no meeting of the grounds Committee had been held for some time. The reason given by the Chairman (Whitfeld) was the difficulty in getting a quorum. So the Committee membership was increased to five by the addition of Dr. Ainslie and the Conservator of Forests Mr. Kessell. The membership then was Whitfeld, Gillett, Ainslie, Kessell and Somerville.
In July 1936 the constitution and functions as drafted were adopted by the Senate. These have remained up to the present (1946), the only change being the reduction in membership to the Vice Chancellor and W. Somerville with power to co-opt. No occasion has arisen to require, in the opinion of the Committee, the co-opting of other members.

Associate Professor Alexander called the first meeting of a Committee (June 1936) formed to secure funds for the erection of a Memorial to Shann. (This is dealt with under Shann Page).

In 1932 Sir Walter James directed attention to the necessity for proper By Laws to give the Senate and its Officers authority to control the behaviour of the Public using the grounds. He was requested to draft a proper code and he did so.

Professor Ross in 1938 when acting Vice Chancellor, suggested the desirability of closing the grounds to the Public on one day in each year to retain control. Our Solicitors did not think such action really necessary.

The Agricultural Institute was opened 28th October 1938. During the building operations the need for access by made road was felt. This need had been foreseen as shown by the records of a meeting of the Grounds Committee held 5th April 1938. Professor Nichols (Agriculture) was present and submitted a plan of how he desired the proposed buildings should be arranged. The Grounds Committee decided:

1. That the line forming a continuation Eastward of the South side of Myers Street should form the Northern Boundary of the Agriculture Site.

2. That in determining the Western boundary of the Agriculture Site, sufficient land be left along the whole western front to divide into quarter acre blocks for residential purposes with each block having a minimum frontage of 66 ft.

3. **Continuation of Myers Street.** It was decided to recommend to the Senate that Myers Street be continued through to the riverside road on the Crawley foreshore, and that negotiations be opened up with the Subiaco Council to secure the best terms from them for the construction of
the road if the University transfer it to them. The continuation of the road to be of similar width to the present made portion of Myers Street, which was understood to be 66 feet wide.

4. **Condition of Riverside Road on Crawley foreshore.**

In the discussion, it was pointed out that the Riverside road along the Crawley foreshore was in a very bad bumpy condition, and that traffic was limited, by the State Gardens Board, to motor cars and light motor traffic. The road would eventually be a link in the proposed riverside drive from Perth to Fremantle.

The Committee decided to recommend to the Senate that the Chairman of the State Gardens Board be approached with a view to joint action by the University and the Gardens Board in approaching the Main Roads Board to have the Riverside road declared a main road so that its construction and maintenance could be taken over by the Main Roads Board, and with the view of immediate action to have the road constructed as far as Myers Street.

This business was transacted at the last meeting of the Grounds Committee which Whitfield attended before leaving for his 1938 trip to Europe. I was appointed Chairman at the next meeting and to me was left the task of continuing the negotiations with the Subiaco Council and with the Main Roads Board.

The Subiaco Council when approached (25/5/38) with regard to Myers Street were distinctly hostile and not very courteous. They refused to find any money for the construction of a street which they said would serve nobody but the University, this notwithstanding the obvious fact that it was constantly used by a large number of their Ratepayers to get to the Beach at Matilda Bay.

The discussion with the Subiaco Council and the possibility of the street being dedicated for street purposes even against the desire of the University led to an examination of our title under the terms of the 999 years Lease with the result as shown by an extract from the Senate minutes for August 15th, 1938.

**Letter from the Under Secretary for Lands, regarding the Resumption of Myers Street in University Land.**

The General Purposes Committee reported as follows:-

The Pro-Chancellor Somervile referred to the above matter which came up for consideration at the last meeting of the Senate. He stated that the 999 years' lease of the Crawley site included 22 acres plus the continuation of Myers Street. A condition in the lease provided that if within 10 years of the issue of the lease in 1919, the State
Government desired to establish a Forests Products laboratory; they had power to resume this area. The 10 year period expired in 1929, and no further claim could now be made by the Government. Mr. Somerville stated that he had consulted the Under Secretary for Lands, and that if the Lands Department were advised of the position, and that the University did not desire the Myers Street to be resumed, no further action would be taken.

The Committee recommended that the Lands Department be advised on the lines recommended by the Pro-Chancellor. The recommendation was adopted by the Senate.

As Subiaco Council were not disposed to be co-operative I next interviewed the Chairman of the Parks and Gardens Board with a view in the first instance to securing road access to the Institute of Agriculture.

Mr. Shapcott was favourable to a joint approach to the Main Roads Board. Mr. Shapcott, Mr. Tindale, Chairman and Chief Engineer of Main Roads Board, and myself had a long discussion in Mr. Shapcott's office. It was plain from the beginning that Mr. Tindale liked the idea of this road and of making it a "Main" road within the meaning of the Act. He visualised it as the first section of a great "by the riverside Highway" reaching at least as far as Claremont and in the future as far as North Fremantle. As far as Claremont it is merely a matter of reclaiming a sufficient width with sand from the river bed such as has already been done at Dalkeith and other places. Beyond Claremont the configuration of the foreshore, which is steep with deep water close inshore, will make a continuation of a river front drive much more expensive. Mr. Tindale agreed to recommend the construction, for the present, as far as the junction with Parkway, which is the Street in Subiaco which forms the Western frontage of the University site, at its water front at Nedlands.

Mr. Tindale mentioned two conditions before the work was approved. The road must follow the alignment, the bends and angles prescribed by his engineers and it must be of at least the width of a "Standard Main Road" that is wide.
To comply with these conditions it would be necessary to cede to the Crown a strip of land on each side of the old Crawley Homestead private Road. The strip would be of varying widths from nil to 30 feet. That on the west side would come out of University land and that on the East or river side would come out of the Park controlled by the Parks and Gardens Board. Mr. Shapcott and I willingly agreed to recommend this action to our respective organisations.

I reported the negotiations to the Senate meeting in October 1938, and the ceding of the necessary land and setting back of the fences to the new alignment was approved.

The following is an extract from the Senate Minutes -

**QUESTION of MAIN ROAD on CRAWLEY FORESHORE - October 1938.**

Following upon a report from the Pro-Chancellor Somerville, the Finance Committee recommended the Senate to agree to a strip of land along the University boundary on the Crawley foreshore being vested in the Main Roads Board in order that the proposed new main road along the foreshore could be gone on with. This would mean approving of the alignment indicated by pegs recently put in by the Main Roads Board, which were within the University boundary, from 20 feet to 30 feet at various intervals. The present gravel foreshore road was a private road under the control of the State Gardens Board, and the Chairman of the State Gardens Board had agreed to hand this road over for gazettal as a public road, provided the University gave the necessary strip of its land where required for a main road of standard size.
The recommendation of the Finance Committee was approved by the Senate.

Professor Nichols (Agriculture) suggested (July 1938) that the Agricultural Institute required a name to distinguish it from the State Department of Agriculture with which it was often confused. He suggested it be called the Hackett Institute. I objected to this for while yielding to no one in my appreciation of the Hackett Bequest it seemed to me that we had his name sufficiently, perhaps more than sufficiently emphasised. Thinking this a good opportunity of having one of our musical Aboriginal names as a set off against the ugly English name Crawley. I wrote to Mr. Bray, Secretary to the State Governments Advisory Committee on Nomenclature, asking him what was the Aboriginal name of the District. His reply was that - Crawley was called GOODAMBOORUP and Crawley Spit called BOORIANUP.

The first would obviously not do. It sounded too much like a malidiction to be used in polite society or even in Scientific Agricultural Society. But Bocrianup was perfect for the purpose. It rolled smoothly off the tongue and is musical like Coolgardie or Kalgoorlie or Mooliabeenie or many others if proper value is given to the double O.

Another virtue in the name was that when the Agricultural Institute does research work (as it will I have no doubt) which is known overseas (the present Professor Underwood has already accomplished that) there would have been no possibility of mistaking it for anything but Australian. But the Senate like so many Australian bodies made up of men of similar type shrank from the possibility of emphasising their Australianism. They prefer to import everything from ploughs to Professors. So the Senate named it the Institute of Agriculture, University of Western Australia.
This is much too long a name ever to be commonly used, so inevitably it will come to be known as the Crawley Institute and so spread that ugly English name Crawley,

**FOOTNOTE** - One curious incident connected with the discussion as to the name Boorianup I am reminded of by a note on my papers of the time. Sufficient was said in debate for me to be very doubtful of success, but one of the reasons why I did not push the matter to a vote was a veiled hint I got from a member of the Senate who was a Roman Catholic that if I persisted there was a danger of the name Forrest being chosen on the motion of James. Why the Roman Catholic Church should not want it to be called Forrest I do not know. But the possibility that my action might lead to the name Forrest was sufficient to make me abandon my efforts to secure Boorianup.

To John Forrest the bush man and explorer, I take off my hat and John Forrest the State Premier is entitled to credit for the courage and vigour of his Public Works programme. But he had never had anything to do with establishing the Western Australian University and in Federal politics Sir John afterwards the first Australian Lord was petty and mean. The story of the origin of his Lordship is worth repeating. From the book "They called him Billy".

After the Road by Matilda Bay to Nedlands came into use it was found that it too required a name. I wrote to Mr. Millington the then Minister for Public Works pointing out that the names Winthrop and Hackett had already been used ad nauseam and that two other men both Premiers of the State Frank Wilson and John Scaddan had been closely associated with the University Site. Wilson as the Premier who first moved to improve the foreshores of the Swan by the resumption of the necessary land and Scaddan was one of the first to direct attention to Crawley as suitable for a University Site. Mr. F. Wilson had also been one of the original University Senators.
I suggested to the Minister that either Wilson Highway or Scaddan Highway would be a suitable name and a fitting recognition of past services.

Much to my disgust the reply I received was that at the instigation of Dr. Battye and by means of an obscure paragraph in a Government Gazette it had already been named Hackett Highway.

About 1938 the "Scum on the pond" nuisance became so pronounced that Professor Nichols, Agriculture, was asked to find some method of eradicating it. After experimenting he reported that a solution of Copper would kill the Algae, but unfortunately the solution to be effective had to be so strong that it killed the Gold Fish. The pest is a fresh water algae. It is supposed to have been introduced into the Reflecting Pool on the feet of shags who came after the Gold Fish. After being cleared by the Gardeners it rapidly increases until it becomes an ugly disfigurement in the day light and interferes with the reflection of the buildings which on still days and at night when flood lit was so fine.

Some of the leading members of the Guild conceived of an ambitious plan for a large Sports Stadium which as well as for the students use was to be a commercial enterprise and be let for hire for Sports Carnivals of all kinds. Professor Nichols agreed to let them have sufficient of the area set apart for Agricultural experiments on condition that he might use it for grazing purposes. The scheme also required two of the ½ acre building blocks facing Park Way for a public entrance, Grand stands etc. The Senate (July 1938) agreed to allot the necessary land. Working Bees were organised and set to work with vim, having no experience of clearing the scrub and tree tops soon disappeared but when the really hard work of stump grubbing began their interest began to flag. After about a year an expensive contract was let to complete the clearing. By the time this was completed a new set of
Guild Officers were in the saddle. They were young and full of ideas as befits the young. They had grown stale on the Stadium project, and after some years the proposal was abandoned and the Institute of Agriculture paid the Guild the sum of £250 for the improvements and resumed possession of the land.

A like story could be told about the Riley Oval and the Murdoch Oval. The details given are the foundation of an opinion I have long held. The personnel of the Guild is constantly changing, it is therefore impossible for that body to have any continuing policy. The running of the Sports grounds should be a function of the Guild and the Senate should be guided by that body as to improvements and alterations of the Playing fields, but the execution of permanent improvements and general long range policy is a function of the Senate. For funds it should be authorised to draw on the large revenue at present collected by the Guild. A sum of over £4000 per year is a large sum to expect a constantly changing body to spend with wisdom.

On his return from each of the three visits he made to Europe and America, Professor Whitfeld always enlarged upon the desirability of the W.A. Students doing some voluntary work for their University. He also advocated that they be encouraged to take paid employment in the Refectory and on the University grounds, clearing, making roads footpaths, etc in term time and outside the University in Vacation. He had been impressed with the amount of such work he had seen in America. But nothing ever came of his urging.

During the great depression in the nineteen thirties he elaborated a scheme whereby the Senior students were to conduct classes for the unemployed. The unemployed were in return to do work on the grounds and building. This like so many of Whitfeld's schemes arose from excellent motives but was utterly impracticable and did not get beyond the discussion stage.
On his return in 1938 he was particularly insistent that the students should do something voluntary. He bought £20 worth of axes, picks and shovels and with them the students began to clear what is now called Murdoch Oval, but after a small amount of scrub had been knocked down the effort petered out and the rubbish remained until cleared up by the Gardeners.

Mr. Tom Bath, at one time an active Trade Unionist and one of the original members of the Senate would naturally view this matter of voluntary and paid student labour from a different angle to that taken by Whitfeld, yet he also was much impressed by what he saw in America of the large number of University Students who earned enough to pay fees and maintain themselves during their University courses. So impressed was he that he was led to modify his opposition to the charging of University fees. Cases of students working their way to a University Degree by such self help are I understand, rare in Australia.

Now why this difference? I dismiss, as unworthy of consideration any suggestion that in stamina or capacity the Australian student is not equal to the American. There may be many causes. I believe one of the most important to be the fact that very early in Australian educational History the English system peculiar to Oxford and Cambridge with their contributary schools (the so called great Public Schools) was taken as a model to be copied. The Oxford Colleges were at first, in their method of Government and in the qualification for membership, highly democratic. But long before any Australian University was established they had become a close preserve for the sons of Gentlemen. The title did not indicate that those who claimed it were in any sense gentle or refined but merely that they by some means had acquired the power to take their incomes from the produce of others. To secure them in their privileges there was developed the convention that to do work, to do anything useful with the hands, was unworthy of a gentleman. This
opinion seems to us of the present generation in Australia as simply fantastic but it is the VIRUS from which comes many of the prejudices and conventions current today.

If the Scotch model had been followed in the early stages of our educational system, the results would have been very different. As Dr. W. Boyd, head of the Department of Education of the University of Glasgow, said when in Perth in 1937 -

"As you travel South the influence of the so called Public Schools increases....... The old School Tie system is as wrong as wrong can be. It represents the difference between the Democratic and the Aristocratic systems of Education. The old Public Schools represent education for a particular governing class. They result in the segregation of the people into classes."

In short Australian Denominational Public Schools and Residential Colleges have adapted as much as they can of the English system epitomized in the phrase "The Old School Tie". Two conventions forming part of this English system are, first, that the higher education is for Gentlemen and second, that it is beneath the dignity of a gentleman to do useful manual work for wages. Both these conventions or prejudices are being subject to much battering and ridicule. During recent years all the Universities have applied for and received increasing financial help from the State. Since the cessation of hostilities all the Universities have been flooded with a host of young men who but for Commonwealth financial help would never have seen the inside of a University.

This young democratic blood can, I believe, be trusted to make short work of many of our old prejudices. But up to the time of their advent the "Old School Tie" complex was so strong that a student of limited means would soon sense the strong probability that if he were to take a job, say as Waiter in the Refectory he would be sent to Coventry. If he were known to have sufficient means and was doing it for a joke, he would be applauded and hailed as a "hard case" which is a high compliment. But if it were known that he needed the money, then with a few coming
from Democratic Homes he would remain on the same footing as before, by others he would be pitied and by others looked down upon.

All these considerations would apply to young women students, only with greater intensity.

In America the "Old School Tie" never got a foothold. The Scotch Irish and Continental influences on their early Educational system was too strong and there was for generations a strong antipathy to all things English so America to its great gain escaped the "Old School Tie" blight.

In many of the American Universities the numbers are so great that those students who take employment in the Catering or Domestic Departments of their University will also be in sufficient numbers to protect themselves from being slighted.

The comparative intensity of the effort required to attain the Degree standards in Australia and America also enters into the question of how much self help is possible in Australia. To many students, our Australian standards are so high and the time considered as sufficient for their attainment is so short that relaxation from study during the vacation periods is not possible.

In America the standard required by all the better known Universities is also high beyond question, but many are otherwise. Our well known American writer on University matters declares, that compared with English and German Universities some of the American approach the Comic Opera standard.

If the standard is low and the time allowed is elastic then much in the way of self help is possible in America which is not reasonable to expect of an Australian student.

FOOTNOTE: Extracts from "Universities" American English and German by Abraham Flexner, Page 45 The term University is very loosely used in America; I shall not pause to
characterise the absurdities covered by the name I propose rather to concentrate attention on the most highly developed and prominent of American Institutions ....... As for the others - and they run into hundreds it is impossible in this volume to take them into account ............. many of them more especially in the South and West - though the East is not free - are hotbeds of reaction in Politics, industry, and religion, ambitious in pretension, meagre in performance, doubtful contributors, when they are not actual obstacles to the Culture of the Nation.

The Great American Universities which I shall discuss are composed of three parts; they are secondary schools and colleges for boys and girls; graduate and professional schools for advanced students; "service" stations for the general public. The three parts are not distinct, the college is confused with the service station and overlaps the graduate school, the graduate school is partly a college, partly a vocational school and partly an institution of University grade.

Page 53. Another bargain counter period is lived through in the College (University College). On the Counter the student finds once more almost every imaginable article - Latin, Greek History, Science, business, journalism, domestic arts, engineering, agriculture, military training ........... he again nibbles at a confusing variety of courses - four months of this, six weeks of that, so many hours of this, so many hours of that, so many points here, so many there ........ until at the close of four years he has won the number of "Credits" or "points" that entitle him to a Bachelor's Degree. The sort of easy rubbish which may be counted towards an A.B. degree or the so called combined degrees passes the limits of credibility.

Page 154. Quoting the subject matter for which Chicago has granted Ph.D. degrees among many absurdities appears the following -
University of Chicago.

Time and motion comparison on four methods of Dishwashing.

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A Dissertation

submitted to the Graduate Faculty in candidacy for the Degree of

Master of Arts

One is tempted to quote further from this illuminating work, but sufficient has been quoted to show that while it is possible and easily possible, for thousands of American students to work their way through such a system to a degree while at the same time earning their own living and paying fees, it by no means follows that it is equally possible for an Australian student to work his way to an Australian degree.

While exposing the shoddy and shams tolerated by some great American Universities, Abraham Flexner is equally emphatic about the high quality of the Academic Training obtainable by the earnest student at the great American Universities such as Columbia, Wisconsin, Chicago and others provided the student begins his studies at the University with attainments similar to our Australian matriculation.

Another factor in a comparative estimate is the meaning attached to the word graduated. In America a student is said to have graduated out of College, so he may with full local concurrence speak of himself as a Graduate when he has attained a standard equivalent to our Leaving Certificate from a Secondary School.

To those students who are to any extent dependant upon their own earnings the number of years over which they may spread a Degree course is of supreme importance. I admit that special cases generally get much consideration, but there is no gainsaying that in the Academic mixed there is a prejudice in favour of the student whose mental make up and economic resources make a short and intense course possible. I have frequently asked the question - suppose
an Engine Driver desires to obtain a Degree in Mechanical Engineering, why should he not be allowed to take as many years as are in reason made necessary by his financial resources? I have never got a satisfactory answer. There is a kind of Academic Mass production prejudice against the part time worker, just as there would be in a piece work motor building squad against the worker who could not keep pace with the production line.

The desire seems to be that the progress to a Degree should be like the progress of a Motor Car in its building. The Car moves smoothly and as quickly as possible from stage to stage until it rolls under its own power off the factory belt.

So the B.A., to be, must proceed from exam to exam as smoothly and as quickly as possible, until he makes his bow to the Chancellor and receives his precious Certificate and leaves the University with some knowledge but with the behest in the University motto "Seek wisdom" yet to be honoured.

In all their regulations the Universities seem to favour the short distance Sprinter rather than the long distance runner.

It would appear that to properly compare the evidence of self help given by the American as against the Australian student it would be necessary to have much more detail than we have.

It may be that we do not make sufficient allowance for the growing complexity of a University course. We are all influenced by our early reading. The days when it was possible for the Scottish "Lad o' Parts" to leave home with a bag of oatmeal and a few guineas and after infinite toil and self denial win his way to a University Degree, are gone. What was possible when the chief subjects were Mathematics and Classical Literature is no longer possible even for the exceptional student.
Does the Australian Student do sufficient voluntary and unpaid work for his University? I am afraid the answer must be no, but is he much to blame in view of the ever growing popularity of the doctrine "Nothing for nothing and as little as possible for fourpence".

Two avenues by which W.A. Students can earn money in vacation time have been made. Both of these, I have as a member of the Court of Arbitration, had the pleasure of helping to create.

In 1935 the Faculty of Engineering desired to introduce what was termed the Sandwich system. Engineering Students were required to spend some portion of their University course working in the Engineering shops forming portion of the equipment of the large Gold Mines. The object began to make the students familiar with the use of the tools of the trade and with machinery of many kinds.

The Law as contained in the Arbitration Act and in the Awards of the Arbitration Court recognised only two kinds of Employees, journeymen and Registered apprentices. A University student could not be registered as an apprentice for the short term during which he would be employed and as a consequence if he handled the tools of a trade he must be paid the full tradesmans rate of pay for that trade. The employer would be liable to be sued for the full wage notwithstanding any agreement between him and the University student to the contrary.

Under these circumstances the Employers would not allow the Student to have the experience in his workshop which the Sandwich System required the student to have.

The then Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Associate Professor Fraenkel, approached me as to what was the necessary action, and I was instrumental in having a special clause inserted in the Engineering Award.

"Provision may be made by agreement between the parties as to terms and conditions for employment, but any such agreement shall be submitted to the Court for approval within one month after the making thereof."
The "parties" mentioned in this clause are not as may be supposed the Employer and the student, but the Employer and the Engineering Union.

The agreement has worked well and so far as is known no dispute over its administration has occurred. The Union organisers have always been sympathetic and cooperative and satisfactory agreements have been arrived at.

Another industry in which students can be employed is that regulated by the Wheat Handling Award. This was secured in much the same way as that relating to Engineering. The students are employed during the long vacation at Country Railway sidings, tallying the wheat as it is loaded into Railway trucks. They benefit in health greatly by the period of light work in the country and return to their studies with a substantial cheque, the size of which they owe to Trade Union Effort.

THE SOMERVILLE AUDITORIUM.

A feature of the University grounds is the Open Air Auditorium which the Senate at its meeting in April 1945 was kind enough to name Somerville Auditorium.

For an account of its conception and growth I cannot do better than reproduce an article written by me and published in the "West Australian" a few days before the first performance in the Auditorium.

A "CATHEDRAL" OF TREES - Open-Air Auditorium at Crawley.

by William Somerville.

The Chairman of the University Grounds Committee tells the story of the planning, 18 years ago, of the open-air Auditorium of the University of Western Australia, to be used for the first time on Thursday February 15th, for an "Everyman's Music" recital under the auspices of the Adult Education Board of the University.

In our reading of both prose and poetry, we have all come across such phrases as "the arcing aisles of the forest," "cathedral of trees" and many others, all designed to convey the impression given by some accidental grouping of great forest trees. When the Hackett Buildings and the lay-out of the University grounds at Crawley were first being considered nearly 20 years ago, the idea occurred to me that here was a unique opportunity to plant trees to a considered design so that when sufficiently grown they would be in fact a Cathedral of Trees! If the idea could be
realised, there would be a thing of beauty in the University grounds which, in addition to being ornamental, could be used as an open-air auditorium for the production of concerts, plays and university ceremonies.

I put my ideas before the Senate at a special meeting called to receive the report of the adjudicators on the design for the Hackett Buildings. My proposals met with general approval. Professor Wilkinson, the chairman of the adjudicators, was particularly emphatic in his approval. At a meeting of the Grounds Committee held on July 14th, 1927, I was authorised to proceed with the planting. I first of all approached the then Government Architect and he drew for me the ground plan of a Gothic Cathedral with seating space for 2,000 people.

The general plan is of Nave and Transept with a semi-circular platform at the south-western end. The outer walls are a 12ft wide thicket of W.A. Peppermint Gums (Agonis flexuosa). The place of columns to support the roof of a stone cathedral is taken by Norfolk Island pines. The branches of these will in time form a canopy of foliage. The straight trunks can be cleared of branches up to a point necessary to give the impression of height and also give an unobstructed view of the platform. The planting was completed in the winter of 1927.

When the trees were very young, I often tried to interest people in the project, but I soon learnt how small was the number with sufficient imagination to see with their mind’s eye a majestic tree when their physical eye saw only a small twig. They saw only a silly waste of space. So, for many years the late Vice-Chancellor, Professor H.E. Whitfield, Mr. O. Dowell (our foreman gardener) and I have kept quiet about the Auditorium, with the result that for many years only a few University people have known of its existence.

After 17 years, it is not nearly as impressive as it will become - for 17 years is but a short time in the life of a tree - but it is sufficiently advanced to provide a very attractive setting for the initial concerts.

It may be of interest to mention that the late Professor Edward Shann, who was very much interested in the Auditorium, made inquiries from friends in English universities to see if there existed in England anything comparable. It appears that something of the same type was planted in Oxford in 1773, but according to the Professor's informant, so many of the trees had been lost through storm and old age that it was now difficult to trace the original design.

Professor Wilkinson was also good enough to make inquiries, and he was unable to find anything similar. He found that many of the American Universities have reproductions and adaptations of the open-air Greek theatre, but these are constructed of ordinary building materials. So it would appear that in the Auditorium built of living trees, the University of Western Australia possesses something unique.

It is good news that the Adult Education Board plans to use the Auditorium for its open-air "Everyman's Music" recital on February 15, which the general public are rightly invited to attend.
The opening series of Concerts was extraordinarily successful. 2,300 people paid for admittance to the first and even more to the second. The following is the West Australian account of the Opening.

OPEN-AIR MUSIC - UNIVERSITY CONCERT - Audience of 2,000.
(by "Fidelio")

An audience of some 2,000 people under the stars at Crawley last night fairly conclusively established what one may hope will not henceforth be lost sight of: It needs only that someone shall take the initiative for summer concerts of good music in the open air to be a success here. There can be little doubt about the response - one would even say, the eagerness - of music-lovers.

Listening to last night's excellent programme of "Everyman's Music" (given under the University Adult Education Scheme), watching the hundreds on hundreds with their rugs and cushions on the grass of the Auditorium - a human sea around the central island of those accommodated with chairs - one inevitably succumbed to rosette visions. This time it was piano and voice. Strings must have their turn. A quartet in this "cathedral" of trees (their tips scarcely astir in the calm, cool air) would be a delight. And why not an orchestra, or a choir?

As Dr. Somerville, conceiver of the Auditorium put it last night, these things need a "live wire". All of us 2,000 owe a debt to Professor F. Alexander (Adult Education Director) whom Dr. Somerville rightly presented under that title for our tribute of applause. He has set rolling the ball that should have been rolling long since.

Admirable organisation combined with beneficent nature to make this "christening" a thoroughgoing success. The programme was in the hands of three well-tried artists - Nora Coalstad, Lorna McKean and Edward Black. They played and sang on a platform floodlit and curtained, and to help in the transmission of their music to the audience a public-address system was in operation. While it did not take very kindly, particularly at first, to the fortissimos of the piano it was entirely sympathetic to the soprano. Handled very discreetly, it was all but a complete success.

This is not an occasion for critical analysis of Miss Coalstad's brilliance at the piano, and pure and understanding vocal art of Miss McKean, or the gifts of Mr. Black as accompanist and commentator. Suffice it to say that each made a worthy contribution to a notable - and, in a mild way, historic - occasion. Miss Coalstad played a waltz, study and scherzo from Chopin, and later a Liszt polonaise and his arrangement of a Russian song, herself commenting on the works. Miss McKean sang the first nine of the 20 songs comprising Schubert's "Maid of the Mill" cycle, which had as preface some remarks by Mr. Black on Romantic poetry in general and these verses in particular, with piano illustrations of Schubert's treatment of the brook. Later Miss McKean sang a group of French, Irish, Hebridean and English folksongs.

In moving a vote of thanks to the Artists, I said among other things -

"Artists are naturally desirous that their efforts should be given in surroundings favourable to their effort, and it was very brave of them to risk such entirely novel
One day I hope will be necessary for several reasons. The first is the obvious one of preventing the free entry of all who desire to escape payment of the admission price to any entertainment. The second is this. The original design was that the Peppermint walls should be kept pruned so as to be in/20 feet high on the outside of the Auditorium the wall would present a face of 12 feet sloping upward to 20 feet. It was formed that this design would entail a lot of work. So after one or two prunings the Agonis trees were allowed to grow unchecked. As they appear now with 18 years growth, it believe it was fortunate that the cost of the labour compendium of foliage when blowing in the wind or still, looks much better than would it stiff and formal hedge. One result of the cessation of the pruning will be that as the trees grow taller all foliage near the ground will be shed, and the trunks will be bare. There are so many of them that this may not matter but for the inside a thick growing wall of foliage when blowing in the wind or still, looks much better than would it stiff and formal hedge. One...
hedge which can be kept to six feet high or less. This hedge has been planted for some years, but has been neglected and has not made much growth. The plant chosen for the hedge is the Victorian Tea tree.

The third reason for the internal fence is that it is desirable to use the Auditorium at times as a sheep fold to keep the grass short. They will also when the hedge grows through the wire mesh of the fence trim the growth back to the wire.

These considerations were in operation for some years prior to the first use and official opening of the Auditorium on 14th February, 1945, but funds had only been sufficient for a very rough fence. For a gateway, Mr. Dowell had with his broad axe hewed two uprights and a cross beam out of jarrah trees growing on the unimproved portion of Crawley. For the cross beam he found a tree which had grown into a curve and with these materials he erected quite an attractive Arch. The width between the side posts was 10 feet. With large crowds in the neighbourhood of 3,000 people this width was found to be too narrow. The discharge of the crowd was too slow and for a short period packed people so tightly as to be uncomfortable. So it was decided to erect a wider entrance. Both the Vice Chancellor and I liked the idea of hewn jarrah, so one day in his office we set to work with scale rule and pencil to design an Arch of timber in which the width and height of the opening would be in just balance with the weight and size of the beams used. A glance at the finished structure will show that this objective was achieved.

The beams were to be 18 inches square in section and 20 feet long. This length was necessary to allow for the tong into the cross beam and 3 feet 9 inches into the ground. I thought this depth necessary because of the great weight of the cross beam. I believe it would have been possible to obtain a cross beam which had a natural bend
necessary to make a curved arch, but the search in the
desert for a suitable tree would probably be long and ex-
pen-sive and straight beams of such sizes, 20 feet long and
18 inches square, were sufficiently hard to get. To find
a Broad axe man capable of hewing them was the next task
and the Forestry Department was asked to help. The re-
sponse was very generous. There are on the staff of that
Department a number of young men graduates of the W.A.
University and they undertook to find trees from which
such large beams could be cut, to find a Broad axe man
capable of fashioning the beams, and also to rail the
finished articles to Perth and truck them to the job with-
out cost to the University. The next step was the carving
of the name. I selected the type of lettering I thought
appropriate from a Text Book on Lettering from the Public
Library. I had then to find a wood carver. I inquired
of the Art Master at the Technical College and from others,
they all declared there was no such Craftsman in W.A. I
then went to the Furniture Makers Trade Union and the sec-
retary thereof put me in touch with Mr. C. Glossop, a re-
tired wood carver. He did an excellent job, and like the
Officers of the Forestry Department, he was so pleased to
be associated with the Auditorium, he insisted on a payment
less than half we thought a fair thing. The University
Carpenter, Mr. Rickman fashioned the mortices and tenons.

When the beams arrived as the job, I was somewhat
appalled at their size and weight. A little figuring showed
that each of the three beams weighed upwards of 13 tons, so
the initial lift in the erection of the Arch was over 4
tons. This to a properly equipped squad of Engineers would
be small beer, but to the University gardiners with only
a tree puller and one old lifting jack it was some job.
However, the Public Works Department was good enough to
lend us a couple of lifting jacks and after some hours of
anxious work the Arch was safely in position, where it will
remain for many generations.
On the occasion of the first Senate meeting after the erection the Senate (19/12/45) assembled a half hour early to view the work.

The Chancellor, Professor Murdoch, congratulated Dr. Somerville on the "realisation of his dreams" and the justification of his foresight. Unlike other cathedrals which do not become beautiful until their construction is finished, this Cathedral of trees although perhaps only about a third completed is already a thing of great beauty.

In reply Dr. Somerville said, inter alia.

Apart from its beauty the Arch served another worthy purpose. It was very desirable that the University should possess high grade samples of all the Arts and Crafts and it was doubtful if a finer sample of the ancient craft of broadaxemanship existed. The Craftsman Hewer was Mr. J. Warren of Huntly W.A.

Western Australia owes much to the Hewer of Beams and Railway sleepers. He was a pioneer of the pioneers, he went ahead of the Saw Miller into unexplored and inaccessible places with his axe and extracted large amounts of exportable wealth which helped materially to put early W.A. on her feet.

Unfortunately Hewing with the Broadaxe is a dying craft. The scientific Forester with his inexorable statistics of production has decided against the broadaxe in favour of the Saw Mill. In a few years it will be difficult to persuade people that the smooth finish of these beams was not the work of some giant machine plane, but was done with a broadaxe in the hands of a skilled Craftsman. As time goes on the historic value of the Arch will increase not only because of it forming part of the Auditorium, but also because technologically it is a fine sample of a craft which in the past has created much wealth, but is now obsolete.
At the Senate meeting in March 1945, the Vice Chancellor proposed that the Auditorium/named "Somerville Auditorium". The motion would have been carried unanimously forthwith had not Murdoch, with his puck like delight in muddling matters, taken exception to the word Auditorium and the motion was postponed. I left the room during the discussion on the Vice Chancellor’s motion so did not hear the reasons for Murdoch's objection but gathered afterwards that it rested mainly on the fact that the word was of Latin origin.

This objection to the word threw upon me the obligation of searching dictionaries and other authorities in defense of the word. I might have saved myself the trouble for at the next meeting Murdoch had characteristically forgotten his objection and without further discussion the Senate unanimously approved of the name Somerville Auditorium.

After the conclusion of the first session in the Auditorium the following letter from Mrs. J.B. Vincent appeared in the West Australian of 28th February, 1945.

OPEN-AIR MUSIC

Sir, As one among 2,000 music-lovers who attended the initial concert in the open air auditorium under the auspices of the Adult Education Board, I would like to express my appreciation of the board's venture and of its vision. Music under such conditions could play a large part in our West Australian life.

There is perhaps an immediate and practical way in which we could all demonstrate our appreciation of the work such an undertaking must have entailed for those responsible for it. Arrangements for the presentation and the accommodation of the artists were of necessity temporary and impromptu in nature and here, surely, we, the music-loving public could help.

Other countries have proved open-air entertainments to be worthy of permanent equipment. Could we, too, not build a permanent platform with good acoustics and lighting that could house a full orchestra and give proper accommodation to the artists? Large enough to be used for many different forms of musical and dramatic entertainments, sound and durable in construction, such a building could become of great importance in the life of our community and would give pleasure to so many of us. And we who hope to share that pleasure, should try to ensure it.
I feel certain that there are many people in Perth who realise the present need and who can imagine the future enjoyment. I would most gladly subscribe to a fund that would be the practical means to that end.

Yours, etc.

J.B. VINCENT, Peppermint Grove.

OPEN-AIR AUDITORIUM – PERMANENT STAGE – Movement Launched

A speedy response has been made to the letter by Mrs. J.B. Vincent published in "The West Australian" yesterday proposing that music lovers of Perth should provide a permanent stage for the auditorium at the University. To launch such an appeal a committee comprising Mrs. J.B. Vincent (chairman) Miss F. Bunning, Mrs. R. Crisp and Messrs. A.J. Leckie, Marshall Sumner and Max Rutter (hon. organiser) has been formed, Messrs C. King and H Lissiman, chartered accountants have agreed to be honorary treasurers.

Mr. Rutter stated yesterday that Mrs. Vincent's letter had voiced the opinion of hundreds of music lovers who had enjoyed the initial concert in the auditorium. Most of the audience must have realised the inadequacy of the temporary staging used on that occasion. In other countries, particularly in America, much experimental work had been done in design and erection of open-air stages and shells with suitable acoustic properties. We should not be behind in the matter.

He felt sure that music lovers and citizens in general would welcome the opportunity to make their contribution to a project which would beautify the University grounds and increase their enjoyment of future functions produced in the auditorium, of which he hoped there would be many. The committee had received £60 in donations. It would welcome suggestions from others interested in the appeal, the progress of which would be announced from time to time.

At the time of writing, December 1946, the fund had reached something over £1000 about half the estimated amount required.

When I first began to think about the Auditorium I wrote to Mr. Lane-Poole, then Director of Commonwealth Forests, Professor Shann, then in England and Professor Wilkinson, Architecture, Sydney.

The following are some of the letters exchanged.

1st December, 1926.

Dear Lane-Poole,

I have had a brain wave – it is a Ceremonial Hall for University purposes, built of growing trees, and I want your assistance towards it realisation.

I understand that during your recent visit to Norfolk Island you were impressed with the possibilities of the Norfolk Island Pine, and I would be glad of any information you could give me as to the proper spacing in order to secure complete canopy at maturity, or any other information you think will help.
My idea runs on these lines, the W.A. climate is peculiarly suited for outdoor functions for at least nine months of the year. We have ample space at Crawley and if we were to plant trees to form as it were the pillars of a great Hall, we would in time have something we could be very proud of.

From my observation, the Norfolk Island Pine is beyond any other tree suited for the purpose. It can be relied upon to grow straight, and can be trimmed into a straight pillar to any height required. It will grow on the site with great vigor. It has so far, in W.A., been free from disease and it will not be made unshapely by the prevailing winds.

If any other tree occurs to you, please do not barrack for any other - I have set my mind upon this one. At first mention the idea took on with the Senate, and provided rival trees are not introduced, the idea will be realised.

Does your report on Norfolk Island contain any matter that would assist?

I am sure I can rely upon your being with me in this matter to the full.

Yours faithfully, (W. Somerville)

C.E. Lane-Poole Esq., C/o Home & Territories Department
61 Spring Street, Melbourne.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA - Home & Territories Dept.
61 Spring Street, Melbourne.

W. Somerville, Esq.,
Court of Arbitration,
PERTH, W.A.

Dear Somerville,

I was very glad to get your letter of the 1st December and to hear of your scheme for planting Norfolk Island Pines at Crawley.

You do not want to turn the place into a forest but at the same time you want as much shade as possible, do you not?

I would suggest putting them in about 30 feet apart and trimming them of their bottom limbs to whatever height you consider should constitute the pillars of your living cathedral. You must anticipate a lot of criticism during the first few years because the Norfolk Island Pines hate fire at the beginning and grows very slowly. After the sixth to tenth year it grows away well and makes a wonderfully tall leading shoot every year.

The avenue at Norfolk Island, planted in the convict days and now about 80 years old, is a wonderful example of what can be done with this species. Another example is Manley Beach; indeed, as you come into Sydney the only trees that stand on the skyline around that harbour are Norfolk Island Pines, and, Goodness knows, the soil is wretched enough.

I am sending you over a small package of the seed of this tree which may help to start the scheme going I know Kessell was unable to get any seed, and asked me to
get him some, but I have not been able to get any officially up to date. There should be some available by June next year, which is the seeding time at Norfolk Island, but, as you will see from my report, it is a matter of luck whether one strikes a seed year. The other element of chance that enters into the business is whether one can get anyone on the Island to take sufficient interest to pick up the seed.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
C.E. Lane-Poole,
Commonwealth Forestry Adviser.

St. John's College, Cambridge.
30th June, 1927.

Dear Shann,

Many thanks for your letter of the 17th March. I was most interested in what you said about the Economic History, and about your plans in Western Australia.

With regards to the particular matter about which you wrote, our Fellows' Garden - or Wilderness as we call it, I am sending you under separate cover, the Ordnance Sheet on which the College and grounds appear. You will see the Fellows' Garden marked upon it. The map is prepared due North and South. The trees shown in the map are merely conventional, but the main lines of their lay out are shown by the dotted lines marking the paths. Most of the trees were planted I think in the later 18th Century. The garden was then laid out under the direction of the well known "Capability Brown" between 1773 and 1778 and has scarcely been changed since then. Unfortunately some of the trees have been coming down, and in the great storm early in 1916 we lost a very large number of them. You will no doubt remember how the trees were, but some of our Fellows remember when they met overhead giving the impression of a nave of a cathedral. I do not know the exact dimensions, but I paced it out the other day - 110 paces down the centre and 110 across the transepts and rather less across at the other end. I hope this and the map will give you some idea of the plan and dimensions.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
E.A. Beircans.

Edward Shann, Esq., P.O. Box C.130., Perth.

28th March, 1927.

Professor L. Wilkinson,
Professor of Architecture, University of Sydney,
Sydney, N.S.W.

Dear Sir,

When you were here you mentioned that it had come under your notice that some of the Universities, particularly in America, had planted groves of trees to serve the purpose of open-air auditoriums. If you could refer me to any publication which would give me an idea of the lay-out and design, I would be very glad.

I have made a limited search through the periodicals and other literature which is available here without success. To make a thorough search would be a big job, for the information I desire may form part of an
article the principal theme of which is something quite different, and consequently the index is of little value.

If you can help me in any way, I will be very grateful,

Yours truly,

School of Architecture,
University of Sydney.
3rd May, 1927.

Dear W. Somerville,

I must apologize for being so long in answering your letter but I have been trying to put my hand on the information you require.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to obtain any matter dealing with open air auditorium.

There are, of course, numerous reproductions of the Greek Theatre, but I remember that you are interested in spaces formed by trees and shrubberies only.

I think the matter is fairly simple, a lawn for the auditorium, a slightly raised terrace for a stage with plenty of trees to define the space and give some sense of enclosure - a clearing in the woods in fact.

If in the near future I come across any reference or illustration, I will forward them to you.

Yours truly,
Leslie Wilkinson.

FOLK DANCING.

In connection with the opening session of the Auditorium the Adult Education Board organised a series of Folk Dances. The Board had had experience with these dances at their summer schools, but this series was the first in which the general public participated. The keen enjoyment manifest, together with the numbers who danced made the occasion of historic interest for now they have been started and a large number of people have tasted of the pleasure of "dancing bare footed on the lawn" the dances will not be allowed to lapse.

It was indeed an inspiring spectacle. I have rarely, if ever, seen one which moved me so. Thousands of people looked on while hundreds of young men and maids as lightly clad as they fancied, wheeled and circled on the flood lit lawn of Whitfield Court.

An official of the National Fitness Council directed by means of a loud speaker. So the young folk danced
and learned at the same time. What a contrast to the normal air of a conventional Ball room!

The great merit of these occasions is their effect in breaking down the wall separating those interested in University affairs from those not so interested. If one young Australian could be got to desire a University training and to look upon it as a right, provided he or she has the ability to benefit by it, then all difficulties financial and other would disappear.

THE SUNKEN GARDEN.

The latest addition to the many beautiful features of the grounds is the Sunken Garden also known as the Chancellor's Garden. The site is a great hole out of which thousands of tons of Sand required for the Concrete and mortar used in the Hackett Buildings was taken. The design and execution of this garden, apart from the Shann Memorial is entirely the work of Mr. Dowell the Foreman Gardener. At one time it was feared that the amount of earth which had to be moved to make room for the extension to the library would completely fill in the hole and necessitate the removal of the Shann Memorial. Fortunately this anticipation did not prove correct and the amount of filling done rather improved the possibilities of the site.

Mr. Dowell began to develop the plan in about 1935. Shortage of men and money made progress very slow and during the War years work was entirely suspended. In 1946 some money and labour was available and waste stone from the new Science buildings provided the material. The grounds Committee gave Mr. Dowell an entirely free hand to develop his own ideas. There never was any plan on paper, Mr. Dowell seemed to plan as the thing developed. The result is unique and very pleasing and a noteworthy addition to the attractions of the grounds.